this Highways, particularly form Manguli Chhak to Angul in Orissa State;

(b) whether the project has been held up for paucity of funds;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the time-frame within which this highway would be taken up for four-laning to control loss of life and property in road accidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) Provision has been kept in the current Annual Plan for preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) including feasibility study for 4-laning of NH-42 from Manguli Chhak to Angul.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The proposal for preparation of DPR including feasibility study from State Government of Orissa is awaited. It is too early to indicate the time frame within which the four-laning would be taken up.

Four-Laning of NH-8A (Extn.)

1503. SHRI SURENDRA MOTILAL PATEL:
SHRI JAYANTILAL BAROT:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any time bound programme has been framed for starting and completion of the work of four-laning of Gandhidham-Mundra Section of NH-8A (Extn.); and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) and (b) Gandhidham-MuBdra Section of NH-8A (Extn.) has been identified for 4-laning under NHDP Phase III. At present preparation of Feasibility-cum-Preliminary Design Report is in progress. It is too early to indicate the time bound programme for start and completion of the project as it depends on the financial viability and approval of the Public Private Partnership Appraisal Committee (PPPAC). The target date for completion of NHDP Phase III Projects is December, 2013.

Outsourcing of management of ships by SCI

1504. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN:
SHRI MOHAMMED AMIN:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) had decided to outsource management of 30 ships to private companies;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether seafarers' unions have strongly opposed this move;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any of these has been discussed with the Union Government, so far-; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALl/): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Keeping in view the business dynamics and availability of qualified and competent manpower, the shipping companies all over world including some Indian companies often place their vessels for manning and management under the charge of competent and qualified managers in course of their business. The Shipping Corporation of India (SCI)'s decision is primarily actuated by the acute shortage of qualified and competent seafaring officers which in recent past has resulted in loss of trading days.

(c) and (d) The seafarer's unions namely Maritime Union of India (MUI), National Union of Seafarers of India (NUSI) and Forward Seamen's Union of India (FSUI) along with SCI Officers Association and SCI Staff Union Jointly opposed the notice issued by SCI inviting tenders for manning and technical management of 30 vessels. The Seafarer's Unions apprehend loss of job of the seafarer's as a result of placing the SCI vessels on manning and technical management. SCI Officers Association and SCI Staff Union alleged that the jobs of clerical/technical nature could not be outsourced under the agreement with the Staff Union. They also demanded stopping of the tendering process and convening a meeting with them.

A reply was sent by SCI to MUI, NUSI, FSUI, SCI Staff Union and the SCI Officers Association on February 8,2008 explaining the rationable of the decision and assuring that there would be no loss of employment opportunities and the SCI management will completely abide by all subsisting agreements and settlements. It was also clarified that a settlement in relation to the shore staff that is non-seafaring personnel provided that only the clerical jobs which are of perennial nature would not be outsourced and that the contract would not in any manner run contrary to the said settlement. The Seafaring Unions were assured that in the event of manning and technical management being outsourced, the Seafarer's would continue to be employed. The management also had a meeting with the representatives of the Unions to address their concern and to assure them that in the uvent the vessels were outsourced, they would be taken into confidence.

(e) and (f) Government has been informed by the SCI about their decision.

Heritage route between Ahmedabad and Dandi

-1505. SHRI JAYANTILAL BAROT: SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: SHRI SURENDRA MOTILAL PATEL:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the planning of Government for the improvement of 'heritage route' between Ahmedabad and Dandi;